(d) the steps being taken by Government for the speedy disposal of the disputed cases through Lok Adalats in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Lok Adalats are not regularly constituted Law Courts but are voluntary efforts for resolution of disputes through conciliation. Lok Adalats are organised as and when needed. As per the information available with the Committee for Implementing Legal Aid Schemes, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland are the States where no Lok Adalats have been held so far.

(b) and (c) On the basis of the information provided by the Punjab State Legal Service Board, 168 Lok Adalats have been held in the State of Punjab so far. The number of cases disposed of during 1993-94 was 14,279. It is not possible to fix any target as to the number of cases to be disposed of during 1995-96.

(d) The Government has been regularly providing funds to the State Legal Aid and Advice Boards to organise Lok Adalats throughout the year.

Legislation proposing amendment to Divorce Act

6486. SHRI M. HANUMANTHAPPA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the landmark ruling, given by the Kerala High Court recently, removed some difficult provisions in the Indian Divorce Act; and

(b) if so, the salient features of the ruling and whether Government intend to bring forward a suitable legislation proposing the amendment to Divorce Act to be able to apply it uniformly to all citizens irrespective of whether they belong to Hindu or Christian communities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) The Hon'ble High Court of Kerala vide its judgement dated the 24th February, 1995 in O.P. No. 4319/91-L(Ammini E.J. Vs Union of India and others) and O.P. No. 5805/88 (Mary Sonia Zachariah Vs. Union of India and others) quashed the words 'incestuous' and 'adultery coupled with' from the provisions of section 10 of the Indian Divorce Act, 1869 and declared that the said section 10 would remain thereafter operatve without the aforsaid words. The Hon'ble High Court has also expressed its hope that the Judgement will have a compelling effect on the Central Government in finalising its proposal in introducing comprehensive reform in the laws governing marriage and divorce among Christians in India. The Government is examining the question of bringing in a comprehensive legislation relating to marriage and divorce among Christians. The proposal involves repealing of the Indian Divorce Act, 1869 and the Indian Christan Marriage Act, 1872 and to bring in their place a single enactment governing the law relating to marriage and divorce among Christians.

Centrally-sponsored scheme for developing infrasturctural facilities for judiciary

6487. DR. BAPU KALDATE: SHRI V.N. GADGIL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have approved a centrally sponsored scheme for matching assistance to the States for developing infrastructural facilities of capital nature for the judiciary;

(b) what are the details of the demands preferred by the Government of Maharashtra during the years 1993-94 and

1994-95 in that regard and how much matching grants have been released duirng the period; and

(c) by when entire amount is proposed to be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) It is a fact that the Government have approved a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the development of infrastructural facilities of capital nature for the judiciary in which one of the main criteria is that the State must come forward with a matching provision. The Central grant, however, is not unlimited and is decided on the basis of allocations made by the Planning Commission during Annual Plan discussions and distributed amongst all the States and Union Territories as per criterion laid down by them.

(b)

Outlay provided by the Maharashtra Government during (Rs. in lakhs)		Amount released by the Central Government during (Rs. in lakhs)	
1993-94	1994-95	1993-94	1994-95
458.0	1117.50	193.80	377.35

(c) The full share of Maharashtra worked out as per the criterion laid down by the Planning Commission has already been released to the State.

Meeting of Law Ministers, Law Secretaries and Chief Justice

6488. SHRI GOPALSAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) how many times the Law Ministe , Law Secretaries and Chief Justices met during the last three years and what were the subject discussed;

(b) how many times the All India Conference took place to discuss the problems of law reforms, problems of undertrials and other related problems of law and justice; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (c) A meeting of Law Ministers and Law Secretaries was held in Bangalore during 16-18 October 1992. The meeting considered the recommendations of the Malimath Committee as also of the Law Commission on the question of accummulation of arrears of cases in courts. At this meeting the Law Ministers constituted three open ended Working Groups to consider the recommendations of the Malimath Committee and of the Law Commissioin on the subject of arrears of cases in courts and to recommend a time-bound action-plan for their implementation.

These Working Groups met in Pondicherry (5-7 February 1993), Panaji (24-26 April 1993) and Pachmarhi (22-23 May 1993) and adopted statements on the subjects entrusted to them.

A metting of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices was then organised in New Delhi on 4 December 1993, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, wherein the recommendations made by the Law Ministers' Working Groups were considered. A copy of the Resolution adopted by the Chief Ministers and Chief Justices at this meeting is placed at Statement-I *(See* below)

In pursuance of the recommendations contained in the Resolution adopted by the Chief Ministers and Chief Justices at their December 1993 meeting, the Department of Legal Affairs constituted three Working Groups of Law Ministers and Law Secretaries on 'Rural Litigation', 'Arbitration' and 'Administrative Tribunals'. Meetings of tnese Working Groups were held in Chandigarh (29-31) October 1994), Bombay (4-6 October 1994) and New